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How the Yom Kippur War Changed Everything, for Everyone

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It's a war with many names - The Yom Kippur War, the Ramadan War, the October War.

What is clear 50 years after it was fought is that it was a conflict that really did change the world. In this Archive on 4, Michael Goldfarb tells the story of the war that began on 6th October 1973 and ended less than three weeks later, yet somehow the combatants and the rest of the world still live with the aftermath.

The consequences of the war were immediate. Arab oil producers united for the first time and raised the price of oil precipitously. The resulting inflation in the developed world would end the post-World War 2 economic boom virtually overnight. In the Anglosphere, this inflation would ebb and flow for the rest of the decade and only come to an end with the election of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan who broke its back by neutering unions with their "cost of living plus" contracts.

In Israel, within months, five of the right-wing nationalist political parties united into a new political party called Likud, which means consolidation. In 1977, the Likud would be elected to government. It has been in power, either alone or in coalition, for most of the half-century since the war and its expansionist ideology-building settlements in "Samaria", the West Bank Palestinian land captured in 1967, would come to redefine Israel.

In Egypt, Anwar Sadat, negotiated the return of the Sinai that more than 5,000 Egyptians died trying to recapture. His signature on the Camp David Accords was his death sentence. He was assassinated three years later. Among those imprisoned and tortured for their role in the assassination plot was Ayman al-Zawahiri, who would found al-Qaeda and recruit Osama bin Laden to the cause.

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